

Walla Walla River Basin Screening

**Annual Report
2002**



DOE/BP-00008054-1

February 2003

This Document should be cited as follows:

Ahmann, Audrey, Rick Jones, "Walla Walla River Basin Screening", Project No. 2001-03900, 3 electronic pages, (BPA Report DOE/BP-00008054-1)

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208

This report was funded by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), U.S. Department of Energy, as part of BPA's program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife affected by the development and operation of hydroelectric facilities on the Columbia River and its tributaries. The views in this report are the author's and do not necessarily represent the views of BPA.

2002 Annual Report: Walla Walla Basin Screening

Walla Walla County Conservation District

In order to meet the need for protective fish screening, the Walla Walla County Conservation District (WWCCD) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) formed a partnership to implement the WDFW Cooperative Compliance Review and Cost-Share Program. The program provides technical and financial assistance to irrigators in order to bring existing surface water diversions into compliance with state and federal juvenile fish screen criteria. The Walla Walla basin has two priority salmonid species currently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, the Bull Trout and Mid-Columbia Basin Steelhead.

Other partners in this effort include the Washington Department of Ecology, National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Walla Walla Community College Irrigation Department. A Screening Oversight Committee of representatives from these agencies sets policy and resolves issues.

2002 Progress by Project Work Plan

Objective One: Verify Water Rights:

As of December 30, 2002, water rights have been verified on approximately 95 irrigation systems. As previously reported, the slow pace of water rights verification has been an on-going concern. We are unable to complete a landowner agreement without first being sure of a valid water right. With 354 assessments completed, this has been the primary cause for delay in our screening program.

Objective Two: Create Screen Designs

Task 1: Pre-design Site Assessments: This task was completed by June of 2002, with 354 assessments completed.

Task 2: Site-Specific Designs for Phase 1 Screens¹: As of June 2002, 116 designs were completed.

Task 3: Site-Specific Designs for Phase 2 Screens²: In-process

¹ Phase 1 Screens are simple and have no in-stream structures

The screen design work is contracted to Walla Walla Community College Irrigation Program.

Objective 3: Permits and Landowner Agreements

Task 1: Obtain Joint Aquatic Resource permits. All 354 assessments include a completed unsigned JARPA. The 71 completed landowner agreements include signed JARPAs and HPAs.

Task 2: Agency Coordination on Phase 2 projects: NMFS has provides a favorable Biological Opinion for Phase 2 projects. WDFW continues to work closely with the program, participating in the oversight meetings and assisting in landowner sign-ups.

Task 3: Negotiate landowner agreements with cooperators: To date, WWCCD has obtained 71 signed landowner agreements. In this regard we are well above our estimated deliverable of 50 landowner agreements by June of 2002.

Objective 4: Construction

Task 1: WWCCD work with landowners to specify method of construction: WWCCD handles the bidding process for landowners. To efficiently install the greatest number of screens, WWCCD generates project lists of about 10 installations, then bids these out as a package. We currently have three competing firms bidding regularly on our screen projects.

Task 2: Private Contractors install screens: To date 64 projects have been through the bidding process and are installed.

Task 3: Construction Evaluation: Walla Walla Community College is under contract with the WWCCD to perform construction inspections. All projects are inspected prior to reimbursement (cost-share).

Task 4: Cost-share Reimbursement: As WWCCD is handling the bidding for the majority of the contracts, the reimbursements go directly to the contractors after inspections are complete. The 15% landowners' contributions include cash, in-kind (labor) or a combination of these.

Objective 5: Evaluation:

Task 1: Oversight Committee meetings: The oversight committee continues to meet bi-monthly.

² Phase 2 Screens are more complex and generally require in-stream structures

Task 2: This task (post-construction inspection for maintenance and operations) is scheduled to begin upon completion of the screen installations.